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Mama Tokus long-player: On The Ragtime

Expect cheeky rhythm'n'blues, new-gospel, saucy swing, fruity funk and rude blues from the ladies' perspective from **On The Ragtime**.

Original songs penned by Mama Tokus tackle eye-rolling subject matter including: love for older men, a celebration of bigger butts, wifebeating and the plus-points of choosing a child-free lifestyle.

Ingenious covers are dotted throughout, including a blues mash-up of a Sex Pistols number, a reheating of 1937's If It Don't Fit Don't Force It (originally a hit for Barrelhouse Annie), plus a beatbox-boosted version of the Pointer Sisters' classic Yes We Can Can, featuring the wisdom of Bill Hicks, creating a cosmic outro and uplifting denouement to the whole affair.

"I wanted to create an album with messages," says Mama. "I feel that many of the great artistes had something precious to say or share."

"Yes, there are comic songs on this album, but I was keen to create stories and ideas that would be carried along on good music and that would sit in listeners' minds and percolate. Some of these ideas have been sitting with me for a long time, so it's a relief to finally get them down and out into the open!"

Mama's memorable songs are presented with great vocals and musicianship from an ensemble cast of superlative musicians (The Sons of Bitches) resulting in a richly-textured sound that will reward repeated listening.

The album features story-songs drawn from Mama's busy life. A former newspaper reporter, Mama uses her sharpened pen to write witty ditties that would go down just as well in a saloon-bar, a theatre or a cabaret night. She's taken her time to make this debut; she ain't no spring chicken and that's all grist to the mill.

Tracklisting:

1. **That Was It** – a high-octane, hand-clap gospel opener imploring the listener to act before life passes you by
2. **Trouble With A Lowercase T** – a 100-mile-an-hour funk romp that tells of Mama's reckless past whilst looking for a future that's tamer, but not too much.
3. **Too Much Butt** – a celebration of the larger lady for today's image-obsessed times. A fruity cover of The Uppity Blues Women's tune.
4. **If It Don't Fit** – Barrelhouse Annie's naughty song from 1937. Apparently it's about rough sex...

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5. **Wifebeater** – Mama’s signature blues, penned in reaction to Lee Dorsey’s misogynistic yet oh-so-funky Get Out My Life Woman. This epic 10-bar blues number fuses domestic abuse and comedy. What’s not to like?
6. **Silver Fox Fixation** – about the love you can feel for an older man. A much older man.
7. **(Too Busy To) Reproduce** – No children by the age of 40? It’s not all bad, you know. Set to a swing rhythm featuring Vince Lee’s sweet lapsteel, it can be a lot of fun...
8. **Packing For the Promised Land** – A super-optimistic gospel tune for today’s troubled times. So if we are going to the Promised Land, what are we going to pack?
9. **I Just Want Some Anarchy** – a blues re-imagining of that Sex Pistols tune
10. **500 Nights** – written on a road trip to the USA, this strut-funk number talks of blowing loads of money while blowing out lovers. Typical blues fodder, right?
11. **Yes We Can Can** – The Pointer Sisters told us first time round. Now Mama (with the help of a beatboxer and Bill Hicks) is telling you again. An ultra-optimistic climax to On The Ragtime.

The album was produced by Vince Lee, alongside Mama herself. He’s a bluesman in his own right, with several releases, regular tours and a growing UK and European profile. See here: www.vinceleebigcombo.co.uk.

Biography:

Mama Tokus is a soulful jazz, blues, rhythm’n’blues and gospel-inspired performer from the Deep South West of the United Kingdom.

She writes and sings her own compositions – bringing women’s blues bang up to date for the 21st century. And she injects cheeky humour into her music, making her show memorable and funny for the audience, whilst harking back to sassy female performers like Dinah Washington and Josephine Baker.



Muddy waters...

Mama comes from the Thames Delta, has lived on the Tamar River Delta in Cornwall and now hangs out by the River Dart in Totnes. But she’s inspired by the music of the Mississippi. Expect **an Estuary English experience of gospel, soul and blues**.

She’s big on participation, so if you’re watching a Mama Tokus show, expect to get involved with the dancing and the fun, while you’re getting down to her funkiness.

Under the influences

She is influenced by:

Dinah Washington, Dusty Springfield, Dr John, Sarah Vaughan, Josephine Baker, Tina Turner, Barrelhouse Annie, Burt Bacharach, Noel Coward, the Rolling Stones, Rufus Thomas, Georgie Fame, James Booker, Sister Rosetta Tharpe, The Meters...and many more groovy people.

What the people say:

"A hybrid of cabaret, R&B, blues, funk and fun...Brilliant."

- Four-star review of On The Ragtime album, R2 global folk-roots & blues magazine.

"Variation and humour are the two keywords on this album...On The Ragtime should have its place in every blues and roots fan's collection."

- Back to the Roots, Europe-wide blues magazine

"A triumph of modern-day feminism set against a backdrop of olden-day sounds...laced with humour and heart...Just what the soul-doctor ordered."

- 24-7 listings magazine for the South West

"Mama Tokus should be offered on the NHS as a cure for depression....fantastic fun!!"

- A happy punter after a jazz club performance

EDITORS' NOTES

Mama's big on audience participation, headline-grabbing, laughter and engaging the audience from the off.

Mama Tokus **writes and performs** songs and poetry on the subjects of:

- ❖ Womanhood
- ❖ Afrofuturism
- ❖ Music
- ❖ Politics
- ❖ Word-trickery and language

Mama Tokus has performed at:

Gator By The Bay Festival and The Burning Man festival, USA; London's Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, Rich Mix, Burgh Island Hotel, The Larmer Tree Festival; Bath's Ustinov Theatre and the South West's Port Eliot Festival.

As a musician, Mama Tokus has released an album On The Ragtime – a collection of blues, soul and gospel originals and covers – available on iTunes, Spotify, Amazon and eBay.

Mama Tokus can **perform** at your theatre / venue / cabaret show / gig / party / festival / arts centre / supper club / posh house / luxury hotel / superyacht / underground volcanic hideaway

Hear and see Mama Tokus online by visiting www.MamaTokus.com (includes gig listing, downloadable press materials, Electronic Press Kit).

Connect with her here:

www.facebook.com/MamaTokus

www.youtube.com/MamaTokus

On The Ragtime is available for sale online at the following places:

www.MamaTokus.com, [iTunes](#), [Bandcamp](#), [Amazon](#)

And you can stream it here: [Spotify](#)

More high-resolution photography available on request or at www.MamaTokus.com

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